

REMARKS

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1, 4 and 7-9 have been pending.

Claims 1, 7-9 are objected to for informalities. Page 2, item 5, of the Office Action.

Claims 1, 4, 7-9 are rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, for indefinites. Page 2, item 7, of the Office Action.

The Examiner maintains from the previous Office Action the rejection of claims 1 and 7-9 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hager (US Patent No. 5,247,661) in view of Shakib (US Patent No. 5,787,262). Page 3, item 9, of the Office Action.

The Examiner maintains from the previous Office Action the rejection of claim 4 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hager, Shakib and Domen (US Patent No. 5,504,676). Page 6, item 10, of the Office Action.

Rejected and objected to claims 1, 4 and 7-9 are cancelled without disclaimer or prejudice.

New claims 10-14 are added.

Thus, claims 10-14 remain pending for reconsideration, which is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added in this Amendment. The foregoing rejections are hereby traversed.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hager in view of Shakib.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hager in view of Shakib as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Domen.

Rejected claims 1 and 7-9 have been cancelled and replaced with new claims 10-14 to improve form by omitting redundant recitations and to clarify corresponding relationships between the terms recited in the claims and the embodiments described in the specification. Support for the new claims can be found, for example, on page 9, line 21 to page 10, line 21; page 11, line 1 to page 16, line 11; and FIGS. 3, 4, and 5, of the present Application.

None of the cited references Hager and Shakib, disclose or suggest the claimed present

invention as recited in the new claims 10-14 for the following reasons. One of the objects of the present invention is to allow a distribution management table for managing distribution targets of electronic multimedia objects to be infallibly consistent with master information managed by a master (personnel) server (30), even if there is a change in the master information. According to the claimed present invention, the electronic multimedia objects can be always correctly and automatically distributed to departments that are in charge of the objects.

Hager relates to a method and an apparatus for automatically distributing electronic documents to pre-selected recipients. As the Examiner asserts in the Office Action, Hager fails to disclose storing master information in a master server, and updating a distribution management table when there has been a change in the master information in the master server. Pages 4-5 of the Office Action.

Shakib relates to a system and a method for resolving conflicts between different versions of a data object existing in a computer network, by determining which versions are to be deleted and which are to be maintained (see the portions cited by the Examiner). For example, Shakib, in Fig. 6, seems to disclose updating a property of a data object stored in a node, the data object corresponding to a data object received by the node, when a property of the data object received by the node is different from that of the data object stored in the node. In updating the property by Shakib, the property of the data object stored in the node is replaced with the property having a later time stamp. That is, Shakib merely teaches resolving the conflicts that exist between different versions of data objects (data objects correspond to the mere electronic multimedia objects to be distributed in the present invention). In other words, Shakib fails to disclose or suggest anything about claimed present invention's **managing distribution targets of the data object** (i.e., "stores the electronic multimedia objects and a plurality of **distribution target management tables corresponding to the electronic multimedia objects, each distribution target management table including attribute information** comprising at least a corporate organization code and a corporate organization name **corresponding to a distribution target of the corresponding electronic multimedia object**" and "a communication unit (16) in communication with a plurality of **enterprise department servers (31)** and **a master server (30)**, each enterprise department server (31, FIG. 4) managing at least one corporate organization and storing job information defining a job of the at least one corporate organization, the master server (30, FIG. 5) storing a plurality of master tables corresponding to the enterprise department servers (31), each master table including master attribute information comprising at least a master corporate organization

code and a master corporate organization name of the at least one corporate organization managed by the corresponding enterprise department server **(31)**", e.g., new claim 10). Therefore, although Shakib might disclose resolving the conflicts, there is no motivation whatsoever to combine Shakib with Hager, and even if they were combined, the combination still fails to disclose the claimed present invention or render the claimed present invention obvious.

Using as an example claim 10, along with reference numerals to understand the relationship between the claim recitations and the embodiments described in the present Application, in contrast to Hager and Shakib, the claimed present invention provides:

10. (New) An electronic multimedia object management apparatus **(10)** for managing electronic multimedia objects related to jobs performed in corporate organizations and to be distributed to the corporate organizations, comprising:

a storage unit **(14)** which stores the electronic multimedia objects and a plurality of distribution target management tables corresponding to the electronic multimedia objects, each distribution target management table including attribute information comprising at least a corporate organization code and a corporate organization name corresponding to a distribution target of the corresponding electronic multimedia object;

a communication unit **(16)** in communication with a plurality of enterprise department servers **(31)** and a master server **(30)**, each enterprise department server **(31, FIG. 4)** managing at least one corporate organization and storing job information defining a job of the at least one corporate organization, the master server **(30, FIG. 5)** storing a plurality of master tables corresponding to the enterprise department servers **(31)**, each master table including master attribute information comprising at least a master corporate organization code and a master corporate organization name of the at least one corporate organization managed by the corresponding enterprise department server **(31)**; and

a processing unit **(11)** which, according to a predetermined cycle, for each electronic multimedia object stored in the storage unit,

reads the attribute information in the corresponding distribution target management table stored in the storage unit, and the master attribute information in the master tables stored in the master server **(30)** through the communication unit,

compares the corporate organization code and the corporate organization name of the read attribute information with the master corporate organization code and the master corporate organization name of the read master attribute information **(30)**,

retrieves from the enterprise department server (31) corresponding to the master corporate organization code of the read master attribute information (30), through the communication unit, the job information defining the job of the at least one corporate organization stored in the enterprise department server (31), if determined that at least one of the corporate organization code and the corporate organization name of the read attribute information coincides with at least one of the master corporate organization code and the master corporate organization name of the read master attribute information (30),

determines whether the job defined by the retrieved job information coincides with a job to which the electronic multimedia object relates, and

rewrites the attribute information in the corresponding distribution target management table of the electronic multimedia object, if determined that the attribute information does not coincide with the master attribute information (30) and that the retrieved job information coincides with the job to which the electronic multimedia object relates.

CLAIM REJECTION - 35 USC 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

Regarding the indefiniteness rejection, the Examiner in page 2, item 7 of the Office Action, asserts, "Regarding independent claim 1, it is unclear what "does not ***coincide*** with job information of a corresponding organization of the enterprise in the master enterprise job information""(line 28). The new independent claims 10, 13, and 14, using claim 10 as an example, recite,

... retrieves from the enterprise department server (31) corresponding to the master corporate organization code of the read master attribute information (30), through the communication unit, the job information defining the job of the at least one corporate organization stored in the enterprise department server (31), ***if determined that at least one of the corporate organization code and the corporate organization name of the read attribute information coincides with at least one of the master corporate organization code and the master corporate organization name of the read master attribute information (30);***

determines whether the job defined by the retrieved job information ***coincides*** with a job to which the electronic multimedia object relates, and

rewrites the attribute information in the corresponding distribution target management table of the electronic multimedia object, if determined that the attribute information ***does not coincide*** with the master attribute information (30) and that the retrieved job information coincides with the job to which the electronic multimedia object relates.


The phrase "**coincide**" may be defined according to its ordinary English dictionary definition as corresponding in nature, character, or function, or to be in accord or agreement. Support for the phrases "**coincide**" and "**does not coincide**" can be found, for example, in FIG. 6 and decision block 107. Therefore, independent claims 10, 13 and 14 can be understood by one skilled in the art and are definite.

CONCLUSION

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,
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